

## Ideas and Innovations

# The Inflatable Silastic Bag: A Practical Device that Simplifies Augmentation Mammoplasty

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In the process of performing an augmentation mammoplasty we have found that after insertion of the prosthesis into the newly created space, should circumstances call for an enlargement of the pocket, dissection had to be achieved by finger manipulation. The prosthesis in place produced countertraction to the action of the dissecting finger.

Having this principle in mind, during an augmentation mammoplasty, we proceed to carve a small pocket under the breast combining sharp and blunt dissection at the first stage of the augmentation; then we insert a custom-made inflatable Silastic bag with a thicker wall than that of the regular mammary prosthesis (manufactured for us by McGhan Co.). This inflatable Silastic bag has a volume of approximately 200 cc for air or water (Fig. 1).

The Silastic bag is inserted and fitted into the shallow space just created (Fig. 2). Using a 50-cc



FIG. 1. Inflatable Silastic bag manufactured by McGhan Co. of approximately 200-cc capacity.

syringe, air is pushed into the bag (Fig. 3, left). Approximately 100 cc may be sufficient to initiate the dissection, after which the assistant may increase the amount of air accordingly as the sur-



FIG. 2. (Left and right) The Silastic bag is inserted and fitted in the shallow space just created.

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FIG. 3. (Left) Air is pushed into the bag using a 50-cc syringe. (Right) Blunt dissection of the pocket carried out by the surgeon's finger. There is no risk of rupturing the implant.

geon proceeds with the final dissection of the pocket (Fig. 3, right). The air is then released and the Silastic bag, now completely emptied, is removed. The operative site is inspected, hemostasis obtained, and the permanent prosthesis inserted.

#### DISCUSSION

The great advantage of this technique is the simplification of the dissection at the initial stage of an augmentation mammoplasty, because the Silastic bag gives countertraction to the surgeon's finger. There is absolutely no risk of rupture of the implant, since the permanent silicone prosthesis awaits complete site clearance for insertion.

Finally, the operative site is inspected for hemostasis before the insertion of the permanent prosthesis.

#### SUMMARY

A practical technique for blunt dissection of the pocket during an augmentation mammoplasty using an inflatable Silastic bag before the insertion of the permanent silicone prosthesis is presented.

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